

The "Berlin Declaration" from the year 1909 in its entirety

The "Berlin Declaration" from 1909 in its entirety Here we would like to publish a document that is of great importance for the assessment of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movement: The so-called "Berlin Declaration", with which numerous leading brothers from Bible-believing circles in Germany warned against the then still young "Pentecostal movement" in 1909.

Much disparaging and slanderous things are said about the Berlin Declaration today; many Pentecostals and Charismatics seriously claim that it is to blame for Hitler and the Second World War. However, the spiritually-minded brothers who drafted this warning had seriously and thoroughly examined the German Pentecostal movement, which originated in 1905 from "revival meetings" in Kassel, after initially being partially sympathetic to it. They did not take the clear spiritual judgment on the Pentecostal movement lightly, and this judgment has been fully confirmed by the further development of this movement (up to the current Charismatic movement).

As a former follower of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movement, I can only testify that the Berlin Declaration tells the truth about this movement - with a clarity that is lacking today in many spiritual heirs of the signatories. Especially for younger Christians who hardly know the history of the spiritual battles of earlier times, this important document of spiritual watchman service should be reproduced in its entirety.

Leonberg, im August 2007

Rudolf EBERTSHÄUSER

The Berlin Declaration in full with signatures

The undersigned brothers raise their voices in warning against the so-called Pentecostal movement.

1. After serious joint examination of extensive and reliable material before the Lord, we have come to the following conclusion:

- a) The movement is inextricably linked to the movement of Los Angeles – Christiana – Hamburg – Kassel – Großalmerode. Attempts to deny this connection fail in the face of the facts.
- b) The so-called Pentecostal movement is not from above, but from below; it has many phenomena in common with spiritualism. Demons are at work in it, which, guided by Satan with cunning, mix lies and truth in order to mislead the children of God. In many cases, the so-called "spiritually gifted" have subsequently proven to be possessed.
- c) The personal loyalty and devotion of individual leading brothers and sisters cannot make us err in the conviction that this movement is from below, nor can the healings, tongues, prophecies, etc., Irvingianism, and even with "Christian Science" and spiritualism. that accompany the movement. Such signs have often been associated with similar movements, e.g. with Irvingianism, and even with "Christian Science" and spiritualism.

d) The spirit in this movement produces spiritual and physical power effects; nevertheless, it is a false spirit. It has revealed itself as such. The ugly manifestations, such as collapsing, facial twitches, trembling, screaming, disgusting, loud laughter, etc., also occur this time in gatherings. We leave it open how much of it is demonic, how much is hysterical or psychological – such phenomena are not God-wrought.

e) The spirit of this movement introduces itself through the Word of God, but pushes it into the background through so-called "prophecies." Cf. 2 Chron. 18:18-22. In general, there is a great danger in these prophecies; not only have blatant contradictions been revealed in them, but they bring brothers and their entire work into slavish dependence on the "messages." In the manner of their transmission, the latter resemble the messages of spiritualist mediums. The transmitters are mostly women. This has led in various points of the movement to the fact that, against the clear instructions of Scripture, women, even young girls, stand in a leading position in the center of the work.

2. To recognize such a movement as a gift from God is impossible. It is, of course, not excluded that in the meetings the proclamation of the Word of God brings forth fruit through the power inherent in it. Inexperienced siblings allow themselves to be deceived by such blessings of the Word of God. However, these do not change the lying character of the whole movement, cf. 2 Cor. 11:3-4 and 14.

3. The Church of God in Germany has reason to bow deeply over the fact that this movement could gain a foothold. We all share in this guilt because of our shortcomings and failures, especially in intercession. The lack of biblical knowledge and foundation, of holy seriousness and vigilance, a superficial understanding of sin and grace, of conversion and rebirth, an arbitrary interpretation of the Bible, the desire for new, exciting phenomena, the tendency towards exaggeration, but above all self-exaltation - all of this has paved the way for this movement.

4. In particular, the unbiblical doctrine of the so-called "pure heart" has become disastrous for many circles and beneficial for the so-called Pentecostal movement. This is the error that the "indwelling sin" is eradicated in a blessed and sanctified Christian. We hold fast to the truth that the Lord wants to and can preserve his own from every stumbling and falling (1 Thess. 5:23; Jude 24-25; Heb. 13:21) and that they have power to reign over sin through the Holy Spirit. But a "pure" heart that goes beyond this, even with God-given, lasting preservation, and that has to speak humbly with Paul: "I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby justified," the person does not receive at all on earth. Even the advanced Christian has to bow before the God who alone is the judge over the true state of the hearts, cf. 1 Cor. 4:4. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," 1 John 1:8.

In truth, the believer in Christ receives a heart cleansed without blemish; but the heresy that the heart can achieve a state of sinlessness in itself has already brought many children of God under the curse of insincerity toward sin, has deceived them about sins that still lie in their thoughts, in their omissions, or in their falling short of the high commandments of God in their lives. It cannot be emphasized enough to keep an eye on sin that is not clouded by a man-made sanctification or by an imagined doctrine of the removal of the sinful nature. Lack of reflection on one's own sin closes the way to new blessings and brings one under the influence of the enemy. Sad experiences in the present show that where one claims to have achieved a state of sinlessness, the believer can come to the point where he is no longer able to admit an error, let alone confess it. Another sad consequence of false doctrines of sanctification is the associated degradation of biblical, God-willed married life, in that in some places, marital intercourse between husband and wife is presented as incompatible with true sanctification, cf. Gen. 28 and Eph. 5:31.

5. In the so-called "Pentecostal Movement" in Germany, Pastor Paul stands before the public as a leader. He is also the main representative of the unbiblical teachings previously rejected. We love him as a brother and wish to serve him and the flock of his followers in truth. It is a pain for us to have to take a public stand against him. There have been discussions with him and admonitions within the closer and wider circle of brothers. After everything was in vain, we must now, for his sake and for the sake of God's cause, declare:

We, the undersigned brothers, can no longer recognize him as a leader and teacher in the church. We commend him in love, faith, and hope to the correcting grace of the Lord.

6. We believe that there was only one Pentecost, Acts 2. We believe in the Holy Spirit, who will remain in the church of Jesus forever, cf. John 14:16. We are clear that the church of God has always received and needs renewed visitations of grace from the Holy Spirit. The apostle's admonition applies to every individual believer: "Be filled with the Spirit!" Ephesians 5:18. The way to do this is and remains complete communion with the crucified, risen, and exalted Lord. In Him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily, from which we receive grace upon grace. We do not expect a new Pentecost; we await the returning Lord.

We hereby ask all our brethren, for the sake of the Lord and His cause, which Satan seeks to destroy: Stay away from this movement! But whoever among you has fallen under the power of this spirit, let them break free and ask God for forgiveness and deliverance. Do not despair in the struggles through which many may have to go. Satan will not give up his dominion cheaply. But be assured: the Lord carries you through! He has already set many free and will give you the true spiritual equipment. Our firm confidence in these difficult times is this: God's people will emerge blessed from these struggles! You too, dear brothers and sisters, who are shaken by the facts that our words present to you, may say this to yourselves. The Lord will give light to the simple and humble and strengthen and preserve them. We rely on Jesus, the Archshepherd. If everyone gives the Lord and His Word the place they deserve, then HE will bring the work of His Spirit, which He has begun so graciously in Germany, to its glorious, God-willed goal. We rely on Him, who says: "My children and the work of my hands, let them be commended to me," Isaiah 45:11 (literal translation).

Berlin, den 15. September 1909.

Bähren, Hannover; Bartsch, Charlottenburg; Blecher, Friedrichshagen; Broda, Gelsenkirchen; A. Dallmeyer, Leipzig; Dolman, Wandsbeck; Engel, Neurode; Evers, Rixdorf; Frank, Hamburg; Grote, Oberfischbach; Hermann, Berlin; Heydorn, Frankfurt a. O.; Huhn, Freienwalde a. O.; Ihloff, Neumünster; Jörn, Berlin; Kmita, Preuß. Bahnau; Knippel, Duisburg-Beeck; Köhler, Berlin; Graf von Korff, Hannover; Kühn, Großen-Lichterfeld; Lammen, Berlin; Lohe, Breslau; K. Mascher, Steglitz; Fr. Mascher, Lehe i. Hannover; Meister, Waldenburg i. Schi.; Merten, Elberfeld; Michaelis, Bielefeld; Frhr. von Patow, Zinnitz; Rohrbach, Charlottenburg; von Rothkirch, Berlin; Rudersdorf, Düsseldorf; Ruprecht, Herischdorf; Sartorius, Sterbfritz; Scharwächter, Leipzig; Schiefer, Neukirchen; Schöpf, Witten a. d. Ruhr; Schrenk, Barmen; Schütz, Berlin; Schütz, Rawitsch; Seitz, Teichwolframsdorf; Simoleit, Berlin; Stockmayer, Hauptweil; Frhr. v. Thiele-Winckler, Rothenmoor; Thiemann, Marklissa; von Tresckow, Camenz i. Schi.; Frhr. v. Thümmeler, Selka; M. Urban, Kattowitz; Urbschat, Heia; Vasel, Königsberg; von Viebahn, Stettin; Wächter, Frankfurt a. M.; Wallraff, Berlin; Warns, Berlin; Wittekindt, Werningerode a. Harz; Wüsten, Görlitz; von Zastrow, Groß-Breesen.

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(Source: Hermann Haarbeck et al.: Flight Fire of a Foreign Spirit. Denkendorf: Gnadauer Verlag 1976)